Questions & Answers: RFP, Louisiana's Web-Based Diagnostic Test—A Formative Assessment for the Grade-Level Expectations, 4/21/06

1. Your RFP states many times that "All materials developed for this project shall become the property of the State of Louisiana." As a policy, we do not offer ownership and/or copyrights to our products, specifically with regards to assessment items and software, but instead license them to our customers. Is the State open to a perpetual license option that offers perpetual use while we maintain copyrights?

   According to the RFP, the Louisiana Department of Education must own all materials developed for the project.

2. The End-of-Course Tests are listed as a "Cost Option." We interpret this to mean it is a mandatory offering each proposer is required to submit, but the State retains the option of accepting or rejecting it as a component of the total offer. Is this correct? If not, please explain.

   Proposers should include a plan for the cost option (end-of-course tests), in addition to the Diagnostic Assessment.

3. Could you please expand on the ways you envision using the End-of-Course Tests? Will it be applied for anything other than "to ensure consistency in certain high school courses across schools and districts?"

   The state envisions that the end-of-course tests will be offered on a trial basis in the first year, with the probability that they would be a mandated program after that. Eventually, the tests are likely to count in the School Accountability Program, although no policy for this currently exists.

4. On page 3, the RFP states, "The item format and quality will be comparable to those in the state assessments." This is the only time in this RFP we have found a reference of this type. Could you please explain what is meant by "comparable?" Does the State require all items be delivered in the idiom and format of the Louisiana State Test?

   Yes; all items should be comparable in format and quality to those in the LEAP, GEE, and *i*LEAP tests. Refer to the LDE website at http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/saa/2273.html to review the *Teachers' Guides to Statewide Assessment*, released test items documents, and other information regarding item format.

5. What is the anticipated level of funding that LDE has available for the services described in the body of the RFP?
   Some funds have been tentatively allocated by the state board, but final approval is still needed. The anticipated level of funding for the first year of the contract is approximately 1.5–1.8 million dollars.

6. Approximately how many ELA items are to be associated with each reading passage in the diagnostic test?
   Depending on the length of passage, approximately 6 to 8 items will be associated with each reading passage in English language arts.

7. Who recruits the members of the item review committees, LDE or the contractor?
   The LDE will recruit members of the item review committees.

8. Is it intended that the hand scoring tutorial be completed in Year 1 of the contract, or is this a tutorial that is expanded as new grades and content areas are added to the web-based diagnostic assessment?
   Within the first year of the contract, the basic design of the hand-scoring tutorial software shall be completed. In subsequent years of the contract, new scoring rubrics and sample responses may be added as appropriate.

9. Does the LDE anticipate that schools/districts may opt to use the online formative assessments in some high-stakes or partially high-stakes manner (for example, a factor in students' letter grades on report cards, or as benchmarking tests)?
   At the state level, we do not foresee that any high stakes policy will be developed for the **diagnostic** tests. Districts may have their own policy.

10. On pp. 19-21 of the RFP, item development for the high school level is specified. We recognize that this development may later be related to the EOC program. Does each one of these content areas (e.g., Science Inquiry, Physical Science, etc.) pertain to one course or possibly multiple courses offered to Louisiana high school students? As a corollary, might the GLEs that these items are to be developed against pertain to more than one course/grade level?
    Grade-level expectations in high school are related to specific courses. See a complete list of GLEs at http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/saa/1915.html. For the diagnostic test, items are developed by GLE. GLEs sometimes overlap across courses. For example, Science as Inquiry is repeated across courses.

11. This is essentially the same question asked above, but for the other content/grade areas: Does the LDE anticipate that items developed for a given GLE could also pertain to other GLEs/other grade levels?
    See response to question 10.

12. On p.21 of the RFP, the LDE specifies that the item data should be calibrated using an IRT-based model. What is the intent of this analysis? For example, does the LDE anticipate reporting IRT-based scale score estimates, or use the scaling information for form equating purposes?
    For the diagnostic test, item analysis with an IRT-based model is not necessary. However, for the end-of-course tests, an IRT-based model should be used to equate test forms, and IRT-based scale score estimates should be provided to the LDE.

13. What level does the LDE see as the analysis unit (e.g., the GLE, separate grade/content across all items, scaling across grades and/or GLEs, etc.) for the IRT-based calibrations? Does the LDE favor any specific IRT model for the formative assessment system?
    For the diagnostic test, analysis should be by grade, subject, GLE, and content standard. IRT-based analysis is not required for the diagnostic test but is needed for the end-of-course tests.

14. Does the LDE anticipate that calibration work will be renewed on some schedule (e.g., annually) as more students, beyond the initial 2,000, complete the formative assessments?
    The vender should run item analysis when 2000 responses per item are reached. At the end of each contract year, all items will be analyzed.

15. On p.28 of the RFP, specifications are given for student- and class-level reports. Please confirm that these reports are intended to be in the number correct (or percent correct) metric and that school- or district- or state-level comparisons are NOT of interest.
    For the diagnostic test, reports should be provided at the student and class levels. For the end-of-course tests, reports should be provided at the student, class, school, district, and state levels.

16. The "student menu" is described on p.27. Is the "dialogue with teachers" required to be in real time (i.e., immediate)?
    Such real-time feedback during the diagnostic test is not necessary. A more simple e-mail system of feedback was envisioned.

17. On page 29, the RFP references an Instructional Resources database. Is this a database that the LDE already has in place or one that the contractor would be expected to create? Can you please provide some details of the database, e.g., which grade levels and content areas it covers/should cover, how many documents and files are/should be provided for each standard, will all the replenishment content/instructional materials/links for the database be provided by LDE, in what format will they be provided, and how often will the database be replenished? Please also clarify whether LDE intends for the contractor to develop any of the resources that will go into the database. Finally, if LDE anticipates including links to third-party resources, who will bear responsibility for licensing/royalty issues, checking that external links remain valid, and assuring the quality and accuracy of content?
    The Instructional Resource database is already in place for an LDE web system. This is a SQL database that contains a little over 3000 lesson documents for grades 3 through high school. All lessons are aligned to grade-level expectations (GLEs), which in turn are linked to the corresponding grade, content area, content standards, and benchmarks. The database is replenished with Word documents whenever any or all lessons are revised and when new lessons are developed that align with the GLEs. Excel spreadsheets have been developed to include the necessary fields for linking the lesson documents to content standards, GLEs, and student performance reports. A quality assurance plan approved by LDE is required to make certain that all links lead to the correct Word document and the corresponding benchmarks and GLEs. The contractor should validate any external links and appropriate content. Any permissions for the use of copyrighted materials in lessons are gathered by LDE's curriculum staff as lessons are developed.

18. Can the LDE elaborate on what responsibilities the contractor has for security?
    The diagnostic test has no security associated with it. However, the end-of-course tests *will* require a high-level, secure web system.

19. Approximately how many schools are expected to use the diagnostic testing system?
    The diagnostic testing system will be available to all Louisiana public schools (approximately 1400), most of which will use the system with some degree of regularity.

20. Approximately how many computers are there per school in Louisiana?
    The statewide student-to-computer ratio (public schools only) is 5.4: 1 (with libraries included, the ratio is 4.9:1).

21. What is the largest number of simultaneous users that the Diagnostic system should be designed to accommodate?
    We don't know how to predict this number, though there will likely be peak times of usage, which the system will need to accommodate.

22. Please clarify the term "packet" as it is used on page 14.
    The term *packet* refers to the various resources included in a section of the English language arts test, Using Information Resources.

23. What is the anticipated level of funding that LDE anticipates for the Cost Options and has this funding been approved?
    The funding has not been approved yet, but it is anticipated that about half of the 1.5–1.8 million dollars will be used for the Cost Option, End-of-Course Tests System.

24. What is the intended security level and stakes attached to the EOC tests? Are these low-stakes classroom delivered assessments, high stakes state-delivered assessments, or some other level?
    See response to questions 3 and 18.

25. What responsibilities (if any) for test security fall on the contractor?
    See response to question 18. The design of a secure end-of-course system falls within the responsibilities of the contractor.

26. What responsibilities for test security fall on the schools?
    The state has a test security policy in place now that can be accessed at http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/saa/782.html, under *Bulletin 118*. These security regulations will apply to the end-of-course tests.

27. If schools elect to use a hardcopy of the EOC tests, will they be required to print out the tests from the .pdfs or will the contractor be required to ship test materials to the districts/schools?
    Due to the security level of the end-of-course tests, the LDE has now determined that they will *only* be available online. However, the contractor should provide tests in .pdf format to the LDE.

28. If schools elect to use a hard copy of the EOC tests, how does LDE envision the student responses (and scores) will be transferred into the web-based system?
    See response to question 27.

29. Does the LDE intend that the scoring of the constructed response items be done by the contractor or by teachers?
There will be *no* contractor scoring of constructed-response items in either system. Teachers will score constructed-response items.

30. What level of reporting and what format does the LDE require for the EOC tests? E.g., student, class, school, district? Electronic and .pdfs of reports only, or hard copy reports distributed by the contractor.
See response to question 15. Hard copies of reports delivered to districts are not required.

31. On p.32, the RFP states that a "detailed defensive plan" should be developed in conjunction with the EOC tests. Can the LDE please elaborate on the intent of this plan?
Only an **online version** of the tests will be available. The intent of a detailed defensive plan is to provide the state assurance that all forms of the tests developed for each course are equated.

32. What proportion of students is expected to take the EOC tests online vs. in a paper-and-pencil format?
Only an **online version** of the end-of-course tests will be made available. In the initial year, participation will be voluntary. When the online tests become mandatory, all high school students will be required to take the tests.

33. For costing purposes, can the LDE provide estimates of the number of students taking each EOC administration?
The number of students taking the test will eventually correspond to the number of students per grade in which the course is offered. Information regarding the number of students by grade level is available on the LDE website at http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/pair/1613.aspx. This information can provide an estimate. However, it is anticipated that during the initial year, participation will be voluntary across the state, with the ultimate goal being all students taking the tests for all required courses.

34. In consideration of bandwidth limitations, does the LDE require that the formative system be active and fully functional during the testing/field testing windows for the EOC?
The end-of-course testing window will be about 2–3 weeks at the end of each semester. The diagnostic testing system *should* be active during the end-of-course testing windows.

35. Approximately how many schools are expected to take the EOC tests online?
See responses to questions 32, 33.

36. What is the largest number of simultaneous users that the EOC system should be designed to accommodate?
See responses to questions 32, 33.

37. On page 32, the RFP indicates that "LDE plans to invite Louisiana teachers to develop test blueprints and assessment guides for teachers, write and review test items, and set performance standards." Please clarify what role the contractor is expected to play with regard to these tasks. In particular, does LDE anticipate that Louisiana teachers will write most or all of the items on the EOC tests?
The LDE anticipates that the items for the end-of-course tests will be written by Louisiana teachers. However, the contractor should be prepared to provide passages and Using Information Resource packets for the item development committees. The contractor will set up and facilitate the meetings according to a developed schedule and incur all costs involved, including accommodations and stipends for teachers.

It is anticipated that teachers will be invited to come to the initial meeting with items they have used in classroom. The contractor will provide a half-day of training in item writing, after which teachers can revise and generate new items. After the meeting, the vendor will revise and format the items prior to a second review at the subsequent meeting. At a third and final meeting, the vendor will return with the revised items for teachers to approve.

The vendor should design and conduct standard-setting meetings for the end-of-course tests. A detailed plan should be included in the proposal.

38. Page 27 of the RFP (under Teacher Menu)
What kind of functionality is required—specifically for # 4 of the list of functions create a dialogue with students (e.g., assign a test, assign homework, provide feedback on open-ended items)?
The LDE is open to a proposed plan that meets requirements in the RFP. A user-friendly design is required.

39. Pg 28 of the RFP (under Reports Section)
Confirm that the Dialog with students means that we are providing the link to the instructional resources that are correlated to the Louisiana standards.
Question is not clear. No reference to "Dialog" occurs in the Reports Section.

40. Is the contractor expected to provide the lessons, activities and comprehensive curriculum designed for each standard?
No. LDE has developed and revised lessons, activities, and comprehensive curriculum for Instructional Resources. Each resource has the content standard, benchmark, and GLE codes. See response to question 17 for further information

41. What is the State's budget for this program?
See response to question 5.

42. For online testing, is there a requirement for regionally-based caching servers to provide a consistent level of access even in schools that do not have bandwidth that may be necessary otherwise?
The proposer may include details for such caching servers within the proposal.

43. Section 1.4A, Passages and Information Resources, pg 18: How many passages are needed per grade? Do we bring the same overage (20%) to the Passage Review Mtg?
Please see response to question 6, and then use the information on Table 4 to estimate the number of passages that are needed. Yes, bring the same overage to the Passage Review meeting.

44. Section 1.4A, Passages and Information Resources, pg 18: For Using Information Resources, how many items are in a set? How many sets per grade?
About 8–10 multiple-choice items are in a set. Use the information on Table 4 to estimate the number of sets needed.

45. Section 1.4B, Item Review Meetings, pg 23: Please confirm that during each Item Review Mtg, each grade/subject meets as a separate group for the full 2 days, each with a facilitator provided by the contractor.
Yes.

46. Section 1.4E, Cost Option End-of-Course Tests, Table 9, pg 36: Is the same item development overage (20%) required? How many passages are to be delivered?
No. The number of passages to be delivered will be determined after the test blueprint is developed.

47. Section 1.4E, Cost Option End-of-Course Tests, Table 10, pg 36: Please describe the function of the Item(/Test) Development Committee Meetings. Will these be passage review, item writing and/or item review meetings?
See response to question 37.

48. Regarding *Contract Award and Execution*, have funds been allocated for this program? If so, what is the amount that has been allocated? If funds have not been allocated, what is the anticipated amount?
See response to question 5.

49. The RFP indicates that "proposals must be received on or before 2:00 p.m., Central Standard Time." Should the time at which the proposals are due be 2:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time, since we are now on daylight savings time?
Yes.

50. What is the total number of simultaneous test takers by year?
See responses to questions 32 and 33.

51. What is the total number of computers per school?
The information is not available at this time.

52. What is the student to computer ratio?
See response to question 20.

53. What computer types will need to be supported? For example, will the computers be Macintosh vs. Windows?

Most will be Windows, but Macs should also be supported.

54. Is there a current browser standard for schools?
Most use Internet Explorer, but there may not be a standard within all schools.

55. Does the state have a SIS (Student Information System) in use that we can use to capture student / teacher rosters and import?
The state does have a SIS that can be used to capture and import student information across years. The *SIS User Guide* is available at http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/pair/1208.html.

56. Describe in detail the expectation for managing the movement of students from grade to grade in the system.
The SIS can be used to track student movement from grade to grade. The proposer can detail a plan to manage the movement of students.

57. How will student and teacher data be kept current?
The proposer can make these details clear within the proposal.

58. The RFP requests that the online system allow teachers to do six functions. What is the expectation for item #4 – assign students to take the assessment? Does this mean that the online system should assign a student to take the assessment in a specific lab at a specific time?
Teachers should be able to assign students to particular tests.

59. Should we assume the online testing will not be done in the actual classroom? For example, will testing be done in a central computer lab in the school?
Online testing may be done in the actual classroom, but it can be assumed that most schools will use their computer lab(s) to test students.

60. Regarding the *Ancillary Materials*, please confirm that there is no expectation of hard copy ancillary material production and distribution to Louisiana districts; i.e., all ancillaries will be soft copies that will posted to the Web site in a PDF that can be printed locally if necessary.
The ancillary materials will be available online only.

61. Regarding *Item Analysis*, the RFP states that "the contractor shall be responsible for item analyses once any item has approximately 2000 responses." The RFP also states that classical and IRT stats are required for every item. Does the state expect classical and IRT stats for items before they are administered?
No.

62. Regarding *Data Reporting*, please define what is meant by item demographic information.
Item demographics may include grade, subject, item type, content standard code, GLE code, standard description, etc.

63. Should item review be done on paper or online or both?

Either option can be proposed.

64. Regarding the *Guide for Teachers*, could the LDE provide the number of districts, and any other entities that will receive these pamphlet shipments? Is it acceptable to bulk ship these to the districts and they will coordinate the shipments to the schools?
Yes; generally, such shipments are made to the school districts, which then coordinate distribution to schools.

65. Will orders for brochures be received at the school level and we will pack to school, but ship to district for easier distribution? If you want us to pack to schools, could you provide the number of schools that will need these brochures?
Packing of brochures to the school level is appropriate. Shipping, however, is to the districts. Specific shipping information (e.g., school name, address, phone number) is readily available upon request.

66. The RFP requests that the "system will provide student-level and class summary reports." Please describe in detail the expectation for what contents the reports should contain. Are there any related samples that can be provided?
Reports may contain raw score, percent correct, pass/fail status, performance by GLE or content standard, etc. No sample reports are available at this time.

67. Regarding *Teacher Menu*, the RFP indicates that "teachers will be able to create a student database by entering individual student information one-by-one or submitting an Excel file with student information." What is the format of the Excel file?
The format has not been established.

68. Regarding *Student Reports*, the RFP indicates that the "contractor shall also replenish the database with lessons, activities, GLEs (Grade Level Expectations), and comprehensive curriculum as they are supplied by the LDE in the Word format." Please elaborate. Does this imply that the content already exists and you want the contractor to update the database?
See response to question 17.

69. Regarding *Motivating the User*, the RFP indicates that the "developer should design a system that is interesting to the user. Any appropriate motivation techniques that have been used in computer-based educational software should be considered to apply to this project. For example, presentations may utilize text, graphics, color, or sound. Special visual techniques (e.g., animation and graphics) may increase a user's work intensity and attention to the material presented." Given the type of assessment being developed, please provide more detail or examples on the ideas being expressed in the RFP.
For the diagnostic tests, some techniques currently utilized in PASS (Practice Assessment/Strengthen Skills) at www.louisianapass.org can be reviewed by signing on to the system as a guest.

70. Regarding *System Speed*, what is the minimum bandwidth to each school that would use online testing and what is the current utilization of that bandwidth?
The Department does not currently have this information.

71. According to the RFP, the End-of-Course assessments should be capable of being administered online or in hardcopy form. Please confirm that hardcopy means that the teacher has a PDF form available in the online system (i.e., that is ready for local printing and reproduction at the school by the teacher).
The LDE has now determined that the end-of-course tests will only be administered online within a secure system, and thus teachers will not have the capability of printing the tests.

72. Please also confirm that the expectation is that the student will be able to respond to the prompts in the printable test book and that you do not require any separable, downloadable answer sheets.
See response to question 71.

73. Is there an expectation that the three forms created for the End-of-Course assessments will be equated?
Yes.

74. Since one of the provisions is that procedures should be in place for a student to take a portion of the test and complete it at a later time, is any portion of any test (including the End-of-Course) to be speeded?
Since the end-of-course tests are to be within a secure system, provisions should be in place for students to continue taking the test at a later time within the testing window.

75. Is the End-of-Course test to be administered in January to be parallel to the End-of-Course in June or, since it is to be administered twice a year, is it intended to be an End-of-Semester test?
The end-of-course tests administered at the end of the first semester and the end-of-course tests administered at the end of the second semester should be parallel. The purpose of the test at the end of the first semester is to accommodate students who have completed the entire course through block scheduling.

78. Page 13 Section 1.1 Overview - The second paragraph states "For multiple-choice items and some short-answer items, the computer program will score students' responses and provide scores to teachers and students." Would the state please clarify what is meant by "some short-answer items"? Can the state provide an example of the type of item it is expecting to be scored by a computer program?
Short-answer items that require a few words or numbers will be scored by computer.

79. Page 14, Table 1. For the first year of the contract and development, grade 4 Math and ELA will be rolled-out. By the end of Year 6 of the contract, will the same grade 4 Math and ELA items remain in the pool of items? Would the LDE plan to replenish the pool of items for Year 1 (and possibly Year 2) to decrease the risk of overexposure and outdated items?
At present, there is no plan to replenish the pool of items.

80. Pages 14 and 15, Section 1.2 Tasks and Services: Item Bank the State indicates that "the contractor shall provide two hard copies of the item bank...". In Section 1.4 .A Test Item Development: Item Bank (pg. 21), the State shares that same information, and includes the following information: "the contractor shall also provide an electronic file including all items used in the system." In Section 1.4 .A Test Item Development: Passages and Information Resources (pg. 18), the State discusses the format for graphics, and also includes this information: "...the original files will be supplied to the LDE, in addition to the Word documents with the graphics embedded." Does the State expect the electronic file of all items to be delivered as a Word document? Is this an element of the item bank delivery that the vendor should keep in mind when responding to this RFP?
Yes. The LDE expects to receive items in Word format, with graphics embedded, in addition to separate files of the graphics (such as .png) to allow for any changes that may be necessary to those. An electronic file including item-level analysis data should also be provided to the LDE.

81. Page 15, Table 2. The contractor is required to submit 20% of items for LDE review prior to item review. Will the remaining 80% of the items also be reviewed by the LDE prior to item review?
No.

82. Page 17, Paragraph 3. Will all multiple-choice items, regardless of grade, have four distractors? Or will the lower grades (i.e., 1-2) have fewer distractors and the upper grades (i.e., 9-12) have more than four distractors?
Four distractors may not be necessary at the lower grades, though they are in the upper grades.

83. Page 17, Paragraph 1. The RFP states that approximately five items will measure one GLE. Some GLE's may not be appropriate for an on-line diagnostic assessment (i.e., peer reviews). Will the LDE communicate the assessable GLE's to the contractor or will the contractor make that determination/recommendation?
The committee that will develop assessment guides will determine assessable GLEs.

84. Page 18, Paragraph 1 and 3. The RFP states that the LDE "prefers not to use any materials that use copyright permissions." Therefore, would the LDE prefer commissioned passages over permissioned passages or a mix of both?
The LDE prefers passages that we can own.

85. Page 18 Ancillary Test Materials. States, "The contractor shall provide all materials (e.g., mathematics reference sheet, paper rulers, science manipulatives, writer's checklist) needed to answer the questions and post these materials on the diagnostic test web site." Would the state please clarify if it is expecting science items that require the use of manipulatives to answer questions? And if so, could the state provide several example items of the type it is expecting the successful bidder to develop?
Examples of the types of manipulatives can be found in the LEAP/GEE practice tests at www.louisianapass.com.

86. Page 19, Table 4. What is the difference between an essay item and a writing topic in a given grade and content area (e.g., ELA grade 8)? Also, what is the difference between an essay item in ELA versus an essay item in Science (i.e., Science inquiry)?
    Descriptions and examples of items can be found in the *Teachers' Guides to Statewide Assessment* at http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/saa/1341.html.

87. Page 20, Table 4. For items in Grades 1 and 2, will there be scripting for the students or will students be expected to read and answer questions on their own? If scripting is required, how does the state wish to implement this (e.g., teachers read aloud, computer program with available audio)?
    The proposer should provide details for a plan that is best for younger children.

88. Page 21, Paragraph 1. Regarding item writers, can the vendor contract with item writers (either current, former, or retired teachers) from Louisiana?
    See response to question 37.

89. Page 21, Paragraph 5. For short response, extended response, essay, and writing prompts rubrics, there is no mention of range-finding for pulling student sample papers and/or responses. Will student sample papers and/or responses be included with the rubrics for teachers? If so, where does the LDE recommend the student responses come from--actual student responses or responses created by the vendor?
    Yes; actual student responses will be used.

90. Page 22, Paragraph 3. Will scoring rubrics be reviewed with the open-ended items at item review?
    Yes.

91. Page 22, Paragraph 1. When items are presented at Item Review, what other information should be included with individual items besides GLE and Content Standards? Should the vendor also be prepared with distractor rationales and/or cognitive levels for individual items?
    Proposers should provide details for a plan they think is best.

92. Page 22, Paragraph 2. The RFP refers to "readability requirements" for items at item review. Does the LDE have a specific readability program that the vendor should use on all passages? Or does the vendor have the freedom to decide?
    The LDE does not have a specific readability plan; however, the vendor may propose one for the LDE's approval.

93. Page 23 and 24. For teacher training on the software (including hand-scoring), will this training also include test form building and best test practices for building forms? If so, will the vendor be expected to provide the training and information?
    Training on the software should include best practices for hand-scoring constructed-response items. Best practices for building test forms may be included. The vendor should also provide training and information in the workshops.

94. Page 23, Paragraph 2. In preparation for the Face-to-Face Review the LDE requests a written report including revisions of the items, as well as comments and suggestions on the content and editorial issues, based on the content and bias reviews. For Year One, the face-to-face review meeting is January 15, 2007. The Item review meeting is January 10, 2007. Does the LDE intend for comments to be based on meetings other than the content and bias reviews to be included in the written report?
Revisions and comments will be based on the content and bias reviews.

95. Page 24, Paragraph 3. Regarding the handscoring tutorial software, the tutorial should include sample open-ended items and scoring rubrics. Can the vendor use items from the 20% development overage or should sample items be developed for this sole purpose?
The vendor can use items from the 20% overage; however, the items should be approved by the LDE.

96. Page 24 Table 6 Meeting Specifications, Could the state please clarify if there are to be 6 one-day training workshops per year for each of year 2 through 6 or are there a total of 6 one-day workshops to be provided across years 2 through 6?
There are to be six one-day training workshops *per year* of years 2 through 6.

97. Page 28, Paragraph 2. The RFP states that students will be able to access, read online, and print all associated passages and resources for an item via a link. Is this to provide accommodations for students with?
Some students prefer to have the *passages* printed for reference when working on test items.

98. Page 36, Table 9. Does the number of items to be developed for field test not include the assumed 20% attrition as in the other grades for the web-based diagnostic test?
This question is unclear.

99. Who will recruit the members of the item review committees? Does the LDE do that, will this be an existing committee, or does the selected vendor do this?
See response to question 37.

100. Who scores the constructed-response and open-ended items that are included in the end-of-course tests?
Only multiple-choice items will be included in the online end-of-course tests.

101. Does the LDE want the online diagnostic assessment system to allow students in the same classroom or same school to take the same test either on paper or online? Are results to be combined from the 2 administration modes for reporting purposes?
The diagnostic assessment system should have print capability for teachers to choose the mode of delivery. If a teacher chooses to print the diagnostic test for students, there should be a means within the system for the teacher to add the scores for reporting.

102. Does the LDE expect special rules to govern the assignment of a test that is a pre or posttest?
     In the diagnostic assessment, the teacher should have the option to assign a test as either pre or post.

103. Is there a need to scan and score offline (printed) tests?
     There is no need for the vendor to scan or score printed tests.

104. Does the LDE expect the Offeror to have all or any one of the examples in the proposed system?
     This question is not clear.

105. Concerning item analyses of the diagnostic test items, classical and IRT statistics were requested. Does the LDE have a preference for a specific IRT model?
     See response to question 12.

106. A score is to be reported for the diagnostic test. What form should the score take -- number correct, percent correct, pass/fail (if the teacher includes this information), or other?
     See response to question 15. These details will be determined during the planning meeting between the vendor and the LDE.

107. For the end of course tests, the RFP mentions standard setting. Will there be only one cut score? Is the standard pass/fail?
     This will be decided upon award of the contract.

108. For the end of course tests, please confirm that new test items are to be created for these tests.
     Yes.

109. Page 15. Should the user guides be online or printed? If online, should they be embedded within the testing software?
     The guides should be available online for downloading and printing by the user.

110. When and how often will the vendor be required to provide the LDE with data files and item level statistics?
     These statistics will need to be provided to the LDE at least twice a year.

111. We assume that the reference to pilot testing and item analysis are related. Would item analysis occur on an ongoing basis, item by item, whenever 2000 responses per item was reached from all sources (e.g., all student responses for an item by grade level from all schools accessing web-based diagnostic testing system) or would other sampling schema be preferred (e.g., at the end of each contract year all items with at least 2000 responses would be analyzed and a set of item data cards would be provided to the LDE)? Would items be analyzed only once or sequentially every 2000 responses? Since there will be a multitude of "tests"

compiled by teachers that will be the basis of the student responses, which test or tests should be used for calculating item correlations?

The vender should run item analysis when 2000 responses per item are reached. At the end of each contract year, all items will be analyzed. Item correlations are not needed for the diagnostic test.

112. Is there a specific location in Louisiana designated for the item review meetings? What is the State's mileage rate?

Typically, item review meetings are held in Baton Rouge. Currently, the state's mileage rate is $ .36.

113. Where will the training workshops take place in Louisiana?

Training meetings are usually held in at least three locations in the state, in Baton Rouge, Alexandria (a central site), and in a more northern location.

114. Pages 23–24 provide detail on a training workshop. It is very clear that the contractor will be handling all arrangements and expenses, but who will be presenting at these training sessions, LDE or the contractor?

The contractor will present, though staff from the LDE will assist.

115. Will the system need the capability to track students from grade to grade and school to school to develop student history reports? For how long must student test results and item response data be stored in this database?

Yes; student test results should be stored through the contract years. Details will be discussed at the planning meeting.

116. Will the web-based system need the capability to accept key-entered responses of short-answer, extended constructed-response and writing questions or will hardcopy tests be the only interface used for responses to these kinds of items?

The diagnostic testing system will store multiple-choice items and some short-answer items that can be scored by computer. The end-of-course testing system will store multiple-choice items only.

117. To what extent should interactive or figurative-response items be used in the development of the system?

See response to question 116.

118. What are the psychometric, equating, item analysis, and reporting requirements for the EOC field tests and operational assessments?

As indicated in the RFP, the proposers should propose this plan.

119. The diagnostic test will not be utilized in a secure testing environment as would a high-stakes assessment since items and tests can be printed and copied. What are the stakes related to the EOC assessments and will a higher level of security and encryption be necessary for this web-based assessment program?

Yes; see response to question 18.

120. How will Louisiana teachers be involved in item writing and what percentage of the EOC items will these teachers be expected to write?
See response to question 37.

121. How many participants will participate in standard setting for the EOC tests? Will the contractor be responsible for the same costs and arrangements for standard setting as for item review meetings?
See Table 10 for the standard setting participant information. The contractor should be responsible for the standard-setting meeting arrangements.

122. Table 9 refers to constructed-response items for math, science, and social studies. Are these 4- point extended-constructed response items and would these all be standalone items or would some be aligned to a passage, such as the LEAP/GEE performance tasks?
The number of points for constructed-response items will be determined in the item development meeting. Some will be standalone items and some will be aligned to a passage.

123. Are the numbers of items to be developed for each content area? For example, should 300 items for each English I and II be developed?
Yes.

124. Table 10 refers to 3 Item Development meetings per contract year. Are these item review meetings, where participants review items developed by the vendor, or are they item writing sessions, where the vendor assists the participants in the development and review of items?
See response to question 37.

125. Considering PEM has the item development contract, are we precluded from responding to this opportunity?
No. Pearson may respond to this RFP.

126. What is Louisiana's estimated budgeted amount for the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program: Web-Based Diagnostic Test—A Formative Assessment for the Grade-Level Expectations?
See response to question 5.

127. Is there an additional budget for the cost option End of Course Tests? If so, what additional amount has Louisiana allocated for this portion of the project?
See response to question 5.